

1. The ITB has categories for VoIP manufacturers and Networking manufacturers. Can a VoIP manufacturer also provide a Networking catalog? **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**
2. Is it possible for different hardware and software products to have different discounts or is it the State's request to have a single discount across all hardware and software platforms from each manufacturer? **The State is requesting a single discount percentage for each category as indicated on the pricing pages.**

There are five companies listed in Section III Enterprise VoIP Manufacturers. May other PBX manufacturers be proposed? **No**

I.3.6 Manufactures Catalogs

The Bidder must respond with a percentage discount off the equipment manufacturer's latest Catalog Price List (OEM Retail).

1. What if the manufacture has multiple discounts across its portfolio of product offerings? **Bidder will determine the portfolio discounts that fit into a specific category and respond with one percentage discount per category.**
2. The price sheet to be used in responding to this ITB shows the line number, commodity code and allows only a single discount percentage for all A. Equipment/Hardware, all B. Software, etc. What if the manufacture has multiple discounts across the Equipment/Hardware response? **Bidder will enter a single discount percentage for each category under each manufacturer line bid.**
3. Can the bidder break out more than one discount? Example A1 discount % and A2 discount %. If a bidder is forced to provide a single discount percent then the State may end up paying more for some items in order to compensate the bidder for items which will have lower or no profit margins. **For bid response evaluation purposes the State is asking for one discount percentage per category. Bidder may offer additional discount percentages when submitting Special Project Proposals.**

I.3.8 Warranties

The State is requiring a minimum one year warranty from the time of accepting the equipment/hardware, software, and services provided for new installations and additions to existing systems.

1. The State is requiring the manufacture's retail price catalog. Some manufacture's price catalogs provide a 90 day warranty on specific items and then there is a catalog part number with additional cost to extend the warranty to one year or multiple years. Is this acceptable or will the bid be rejected? **Will be addressed in new revised bid**

The warranty must provide software upgrades for no additional charge.

1. The State is requiring the manufacture's retail price catalog. Some manufacture's price catalogs do not provide free upgrades. There are catalog part numbers with retail pricing to keep software current as new releases become available, are these additional catalog parts acceptable? **Will be addressed in new revised bid**

2. In addition a software upgrade can also require additional hardware and installation and this can vary depending on the size and complexity of the system. Is this acceptable or will the bid be rejected? **This is acceptable.**

I.3.9 Maintenance

The BIDDER must respond with a separate percentage discount for maintenance beyond the manufacture's or vendor's normal warranty period.

1. The State is requiring the manufacture's retail price catalog. What if the manufacture has multiple discount percentages for maintenance? **Bidder will enter a single discount percentage for each category under each manufacturer line bid as indicated on the pricing pages.**
2. Can a bidder break out more than one discount %? **No**
3. The State currently does not allow State agencies to purchase maintenance on PBX and Key Systems after the warranty period expires from the vendor's of the active contracts but rather from a third party Insurance Underwriter. Will this change with the awards from this contract T600? **Yes – agencies will have the option to purchase from the contract or use the Insurance Underwriters program.**

I.3.12 Additional Requirements

The BIDDER, as a potential prime contractor for special projects involving a statewide, enterprise class VoIP PBX solution for a particular manufacture, must provide at least three (3) references for installations comparable in size and scope to the State of Alabama account. The BIDDER must show that it is experienced and capable of engineering, providing, installing, configuring, and operating an enterprise-class VoIP PBX solution for the manufacture bid. The BIDDER'S experience with each reference must have been in the last at least three (3) years for the same manufacture's products and services being bid. Size, complexity, and scope are defines as, but not limited to:

Major Campus IP telephony PBX system extending to a wide geographic area (state-wide) – 10,000 phones or more using Microsoft Exchange as the voicemail system to store and provide voice mail messaging with full integration with MS Outlook, Active Directory, and Exchange.

1. Some manufactures do not sell direct and only sell through distributors. They also provide all the engineering, providing, installing, configuring, and operating an enterprise-class VoIP solution on large projects. Will three (3) references from the manufacture be acceptable if they perform the above requirements? **Yes**
2. Does the State currently use Microsoft Exchange for the voicemail system on your current Nortel system? **No** If not, is the State going to install Microsoft Exchange as the voicemail system and will the also go through the ITB process? **The State plans to use Microsoft Exchange for the message store of its VoIP solution. Any Microsoft software needed for State VoIP will be purchased separately by the State from an existing contract.**
3. Would the State consider or allow the installation of a voicemail system other than Microsoft Exchange provided by Avaya, Cisco, NEC/Sphere, Nortel, Siemens or other third party providers? **Yes**

I.3.18 Miscellaneous Catalog

1. Items in this catalog will come from multiple manufacturers which enhance or enable products and solutions in the manufacture's catalog to function in a manner beneficial to the contract user's

needs. Will it be acceptable to show a State Cost Only in this catalog? **No. List catalog rate and discount rate in Miscellaneous Catalog.**

2. How often will we be able to add components in the future and what will be the process? **The contract holder will propose components/items and the State will accept or reject based on the specifications of this bid document.**

1.3.12 Additional Requirements and References

1. References are sensitive to multiple queries and un-announced calls therefore in many cases we are contractually obligated to use a specific protocol to facilitate reference calls. Some references will support reference calls by appointment only. Can the State of Alabama provide the names, dates and times of the person(s) that will be calling the references? **Yes**

III.1.2 Telephone, Speakerphone, Videophone Device Manufactures (lines 13 – 17)

3. ShoreTel is listed in this category. ShoreTel is also an Enterprise VoIP Manufacture and was excluded from the list. Will ShoreTel be allowed to respond as an Enterprise VoIP Manufacture or will ShoreTel be limited to "SIP" telephone handsets, speakerphones, and wireless VoIP handsets? **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

1.

Question:- Nortel has been acquired by Avaya and Ciena. The product set's and pricing will absolutely have different levels. The only option to this would be to average the product discounts. This would result in the State of Alabama paying more for some items then necessary. Will the state allow further us to maximize the discounts in the various categories?

Should a manufacturer on an awarded line item :

1. **transfer any significant portion of their catalog or portfolio on a specific line item to another party;**
2. **discontinue a significant portion of their catalog or portfolio on a specific line item;**
3. **merge with or be acquired by another entity,**

the STATE reserves the right to:

1. **terminate without penalty that specific line item.**
2. **Allow awarded bidder with active acquiring manufacturer contract to offer merged catalog at contract discount rate.**
3. **Allow current awarded bidder to offer the acquiring manufacturer's catalog (manufacturer line not currently under contract) at the same discount rate.**

Reference Assignment of Contract in Special Terms & Conditions section of the ITB.

Question:- The Standard State RFP Form includes the standard General Contractors License field. Is this a requirement for responding to this RFP? If So, can this be obtained if/when an award is made?

Will be addressed in new revised bid.

Question:- RE: 1.3.10a requires "All BIDDER employees designing, installing and maintaining the products must be certified by the manufacturer". In some instances, we will utilize sub contract installers. Can this be updated to support this scenario? **The State requires that sub-contractors utilized by the BIDDER be certified in any part of the design, installation, or maintenance of the product that the**

said sub contractor may be involved in. The intent of this is to make sure that 1)the system is designed, installed, and maintained per the manufacturer's specification, and 2) that the certification of the system will never be called into question because of unqualified personnel participating in the lifecycle of the product.

1. Are Sections I, II, and III (General Specifications) available in MS Word format and if so, can this be provided? **An unofficial copy in MS Word format can be provided upon request.**
2. Item 6 of Page 1 of the State's bid requests General Contractor's License number and information. Does the State intend to accept bid responses from unlicensed General Contractors? **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**
3. Will the State make an award on all 17 lines of this bid? **The State intends to award a contract to all manufacturer lines that have an acceptable bid response.**
4. Is it possible that the State would renew certain lines of this contract for additional years but not renew others? **Yes**
5. Does the State have a preferred manufacturer as it relates to VOIP and if so, what manufacturer? **No. The State does not have a preferred manufacturer.**
6. If a non-State agency has a preference for a certain VOIP manufacturer solution that is different from the State's preferred VOIP manufacturer solution, can that entity be assured of a procurement mechanism/vehicle for as long as the State's preferred VOIP bidder/manufacturer? **Optional purchasers can procure solutions from any active manufacturer line contract. The State does not have a preferred manufacturer solution and any contract user not under the oversight approval of ISD may choose the manufacturer that best fits their needs.**
7. Can the State's bid pricing sheets be modified to allow for different and separate Equipment/Hardware discount percentages based on Product Family? For example, certain manufacturers offer separate discount percentages to their authorized resellers based on the type of product being considered. VOIP equipment may carry a 15%discount while data networking gear (a data switch for example) may only carry a 10% discount. "Redacted" urges the State to allow such modification as it will provide better pricing for certain product families as opposed to a "blended", single discount for all families. **The State requests one discount rate for Equipment/Hardware. Additional discounts for special project proposals will be acceptable.**
8. Using Cisco as an example, under what price sheet blank should a discount percentage on SmartNet be identified? We assume this would fall under C, Maintenance. **Yes**
9. Some bidders are capable of quoting manufacturer-supplied Maintenance services as well as bidder-supplied Maintenance services. These discount percentages would vary. How can the bidder respond accordingly using the State-supplied pricing sheets? One option would be for the price sheet blank to apply only to Manufacturer-supplied maintenance. If so, can bidders assume that bidder-supplied Maintenance services can be itemized in the Miscellaneous catalog at a quoted price? **Yes, bidder-supplied Maintenance services can be itemized in the miscellaneous catalog and the discount percentages will apply to those items.**
10. Some bidders are capable of quoting manufacturer-supplied Professional services as well as bidder-supplied Professional services. These discount percentages would vary. How can the bidder respond accordingly using the State-supplied pricing sheets? One option would be for the price sheet blank to apply only to Manufacturer-supplied Professional services. If so, can bidders assume that bidder-supplied Professional services can be itemized in the Miscellaneous catalog at a quoted price? **Yes, bidder-supplied Professional services can be itemized in the Miscellaneous catalog and the discount percentages will apply to those items.**
11. Will this contract replace current State telephony contracts T-304, T-305, and T-306? **No**
12. How will new and optional features, parts, and functionality-improvement components be added to the contract during the life of the contract? **Through the life of the contract the Manufacturer's catalog will change to reflect new items. Additional items may be added to the miscellaneous catalog as stated in I.3.18.**

13. Relative to item I.2.4, does the Code of Alabama allow for the collection of fees from an entity other than an end-user or through appropriation? If so, can you please provide Code chapter? Is the monthly collection of fees (surcharges) by ISD (or any State agency) from a vendor currently in place on other State contracts? If so, please specify. (Since most bidders will incorporate the 1% surcharge into their discounted price, would it not be more appropriate for the bidder to provide the best possible price/discount to the State without having to adjust for the surcharge payment?) **Our department's legal division has thoroughly examined this provision and determined it to be a valid means, which is compliant with Alabama code, for recovery of costs associated with the development and administration of this ITB and contract, respectively.**
14. Relative to item 1.3.6, does the State require bidders to include a hard copy of the Manufacturer Catalog with their bid? **The valid manufacture's website of the catalog is acceptable.**

1.) Please confirm that in section 1.3.8 when the ITB refers to the BIDDER providing a warranty, the intention here is that the BIDDER would be required to provide a year of maintenance and support coverage, such as Smartnet for Cisco equipment and comparable coverage for other brands, at the discount levels bid. **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

2.) In section 1.3 8, the warranty for the equipment is a manufacturer's warranty, and is not provided by the BIDDER. The start date for this manufacturer warranty is determined by the manufacturer in its warranty description statement, and the BIDDER is not able to change that manufacturer's warranty start date. Please confirm that warranty will begin as provided in the manufacturer's warranty description statement. **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

3.) This ITB does not appear to include any limits on the BIDDER's liability. We request that you add to this ITB liability limitation as found in the Supplemental Terms and Conditions (section 6) of the recently awarded solicitation 2207258 *Cellular Telephones*. This will allow BIDDERS to provide better pricing to the State because they do not have to factor the risk of unlimited liability into their cost and margin calculations.

4.) Please confirm that the State will add a force majeure provision to this ITB. Doing so will allow BIDDERS to provide better pricing to the State because they do not have to factor in the risk of being found in noncompliance because the BIDDER's performance has been delayed by events outside the BIDDER's reasonable control. We suggest the following:

"Neither party will be liable for any delay, failure in performance, loss or damage due to fire, explosion, cable cuts, power blackout, earthquake, flood, strike, embargo, labor disputes, acts of civil or military authority, war, terrorism, acts of God, acts of a public enemy, acts or omissions of carriers or suppliers, acts of regulatory or governmental agencies, or other causes beyond such party's reasonable control." **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

5.) Some of the manufacturers listed have several product lines with significantly different pricing structures associated with each product line. We request you add to the pricing section the ability to breakout different product sets thereby allowing the State to receive the most favorable pricing per product set and associated maintenance. **The State requests one discount rate for Equipment/Hardware. Additional discounts for special project proposals will be acceptable.**

Question/Clarification:

Language in I.3.8 is contradictory. Is it the intent of ISD to accept the manufacturer's warranty for

products or if the product does not have a minimum one year warranty, is it ISD's intent to force Bidders to develop a structure that is not a true manufacturer's warranty? **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

1. *Reference: page 4 of 13, Section I, Subsection I.3.10-* Our firm has over 12 years of experience with technologies similar or identical to those on the proposed catalog. However, some relationships with specific vendors are newer than the 3-year limit specified by the State. We feel that our diverse background with adjacent and competing technologies, and our knowledge of multiple vendor products features and limitations positions us to provide value-add to the State beyond that provided by vendors with a narrower portfolio. We request the State consider exception verbiage for paragraph I.3.10 similar to the following to allow broader competition:

Alternatively, vendors that can sufficiently *demonstrate and document* the following criteria may be granted a waiver to the 3-year requirement.

- Firm must provide documentation demonstrating experience with competing as well as complementary products with capabilities similar to that of subject vendor catalog
- Firm must demonstrate and document three past performances with the proposed competing or complementary products, one of which must be a State of Alabama agency.
- Firm must submit a certification from the subject vendor verifying the firm's competence with vendor's product line.

Will be addressed in new revised bid.

Question related to I.3.10 - Certification.

"I.3.10 Certification - The BIDDER must have been a certified reseller of products and services for a minimum of three (3) years. The BIDDER must provide written, signed documentation from the manufacturer verifying current certification as well as the length of time the BIDDER has been a certified reseller."

Question 1: DSD Laboratories became a Fortinet reseller over two years ago, but we have not yet achieved three complete years as a reseller. We have been reselling Fortinet products over a time span of three years starting in 2007. Our staff currently holds certifications for more than three years and has been performing sales and services of Fortinet products for more than three years. Can three complete years be exempted to two complete years for the Fortinet line item?

Will be addressed in new revised bid.

- 1) We seek clarification regarding Question 6 on the page 1 of Bid # 10-X-2213304. Specifically, our company is the process of securing a Prime General Contractor # with the State of Alabama,

but due to quarterly filing windows and the response date of this bid we will not have the Contractor # in time. Can we either:

a) Submit our bid without the Contractor # and upon award and negotiation we will have secured the license and provide then?

b) As a manufacturer we do not sell directly, but through approved, authorized resellers. If these resellers have a valid, active General Contractor license, will that meet the requirement? **Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

2) As a leading Enterprise VOIP Manufacturer, our company should be listed as such, under Section III.1.1 Networking and VOIP Manufacturers. Instead we are listed under Section III.1.2 Telephone, Speakerphone, Videophone Device Manufacturers. We respectfully request to be listed/defined under the applicable category. **The manufacturers listed in the Enterprise VoIP classification are not a complete set of eligible enterprise VoIP manufacturers, but a list of those that qualified through a previous process. When contract is awarded all products and services listed in manufacturer catalog are available for procurement. addressed in new revised bid**

1. Under each manufacturer pricing section there are 5 discounts listed. Discounts for each of these categories can vary in pricing, i.e. Equipment/Hardware discount can vary from 10% to 35% depending on the equipment/hardware requested. How do we notate the different discount levels? **The State requests one discount rate for each category. Additional discounts for special project proposals will be acceptable.**

2. Section I.3.6 Manufacturer Catalogs – Avaya does not publish a catalog on their website. However we can provide an Excel spreadsheet with NPL pricing. Is this sufficient? **Yes**

1 ITB, Special Terms And Conditions Page 3, Section Internet Website Link's/ITB, Section I – General, Section I.3.6 Manufacturer Catalogs

Section I.3.6 requires that the Bidder provide a manufacturer's web site for the catalog but the Special Terms and Conditions Section (listed above) states that web site links will not be accepted in bid responses. Please clarify if the Bidder should provide the web site for the catalog and if the Special Terms and Conditions section above will be modified or deleted. **The Special Terms and Conditions Section refers to using web links to satisfy specific requirements stated in this ITB. Section I.3.6 can be satisfied by the web site url of the manufacturer catalog.**

#2 Price Sheet/Section III.1.1 Networking and VoIP Manufacturers

Networking Manufacturers and Enterprise VoIP manufacturers often have products that overlap and are not always distinguishable as delineated by lines 1-5 and lines 6-12. In fact, this bidder anticipates offering at least one manufacturers' product line which depends on the overlap. We recommend that you subcategorize the EQUIPMENT/HARDWARE DISCOUNT for line no. 00002 and 00004 into A(1) and A(2), which correspond to Enterprise VoIP and Networking respectively. The multipliers are the same, therefore, the Division of Finance may enjoy significantly better discounts in at least one subcategory should you choose this approach. The same approach holds true for PROFESSIONAL SVS DISCOUNT, as well. **The section will remain as originally written.**

#3 Section I.3.8 Warranties

Paragraph 3, Number 2 states that, "The warranty will start the date that the contract user acknowledges that the Vendor has provided the solution as described in the Scope of Work and provides written acceptance". This vendor anticipates solutions that may encompass hardware, software, and services. In many cases, hardware components of a solution may be installed and operable long before services associated with the project/solution are fully delivered. Does the Division of Finance anticipate that Projects or other purchases requiring services, that present such a scenario, will contain contract terms that allow for the acceptance of hardware and software with attached warranty, to be accepted apart from the ongoing services components? **Yes**

#4 Section I.3.9 Maintenance

In as much as manufacturers do offer maintenance that fully meets the minimum standard, as well as maintenance options that provide less than the minimum standard; should the bidder clearly mark the manufacturer's catalog to indicate items that are not offered for sale under this acquisition (those that do not meet the minimum standard), and thus not include them in the maintenance discount? **Warranty beyond the contract requirement may be purchased but contract users. See revised bid document.**

#5 Section I.3.9 Maintenance

The bullets in paragraph two states "If the BIDDER is providing the maintenance, they:

- Must be certified by the manufacturer to provide maintenance services;
- Must provide a letter from the manufacturer stating the BIDDER has direct access to the manufacturer's technical support (tier III, tier IV, and developers)"

Section I.3.10a goes on to state that "The BIDDER (if not the manufacturer) must be certified to sell, install, and maintain the manufacturer's products, and provide a letter from the manufacturer stating that the BIDDER is certified to sell, install and maintain the manufacturer's products."

These two statements appear to operate at cross-purposes to one another. If the Bidder is in fact providing manufacturer maintenance, do we need to include the bulleted certifications? **Yes**

#6 Section I.3.9 Maintenance (bullet #2 and bullet #4)

- "The ability to meet the response times identified in I.3.8 and I.3.12
- Technicians and a service Center strategically placed to meet the response times identified in I.3.8 and I.3.12"

Are the response times located in Section I.3.13 not I.3.12? **Yes, I.3.13 is the correct section. Will be addressed in new revised bid.**

#7 Section I.3.18 Miscellaneous Catalog

What is the discount percentage multiplier for items listed in the Miscellaneous Catalog? **Part of the acceptance process will be to categorize items in the Miscellaneous Catalog.**

1) Will this bid replace T498? **Yes**

2) Section 1.3.12 References The state is looking for references with 10,000 phones or more. "redacted" largest implementation to date is 5000 phones but it is growing rapidly. We have

many implementations around the 2000 to 3000 phones. Is this a requirement that is not flexible and prevent us from Bidding? **addressed in new revised bid**

- 3) Section 1.3.8 Warranties The state is requesting 1 year warranty. Is there a Service Level requirement for this warranty 2 weeks, 8x5xNBD, whatever the equipment comes with, ect...
Will be addressed in new revised bid. Optional warranties can be procured from catalog.